

What Sin Is NOT

1. Temptation is NOT Sin
 - a. Jesus was tempted though He NEVER sinned – Heb. 4:15
 - b. To say that just because Jesus is God and that He could never have sinned is to question the nature of temptation and to dilute its meaning.
 - 1) The late Baptist minister, Herschel H. Hobbs says, “It is just as great an error to deny his human nature as to deny His divine nature. Therefore, we are bound to say that in His human nature He could have yielded to temptation. Or else His temptations were not real.”
 - c. Temptation is not sin, but yielding to temptation (giving in to its enticement) is indeed sin – James 1:12-15
 - 1) Notice that a man is blessed when he endures temptation. This is never said about sin itself.
 - 2) Notice that a man is not in sin until he is drawn away and enticed by lust. That is when lust is conceived and then sin is brought forth. It was not the man being tempted that is sin, but allowing himself to be drawn away and enticed.

2. Sin is NOT the sudden thoughts that come into our minds
 - a. 1 Cor. 10:3-5
 - b. Thoughts come from a number of different sources (God, demons, people, surroundings, etc.). We cannot necessarily stop thoughts from coming. However, it is what we do with these thoughts that determine whether or not that they will become sinful.
 - c. Dwelling on and entertaining evil thoughts become sin. Dwelling on sinful thoughts usually leads to acting upon such thoughts – Isa. 65:2
 - d. Acts 5:1-6
 - 1) Peter said, "Ananias, why did you let Satan rule your thoughts to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep for yourself part of the money you received for the land? Before you sold the land, it belonged to you. And even after you sold it, you could have used the money any way you wanted. Why did you think of doing this? You lied to God, not to us!" (Acts 4:3-4; New Century Version)
 - 2) Notice that it was not the suggestion that Satan gave, but Ananias allowing Satan to rule him through his thoughts.

- 3) Satan suggested many ideas to Jesus, but the Lord refuted each “thought” that came to Him with the Word of God (Mat. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-14).
 - 4) Notice that Peter asked Ananias *why* he *thought* of doing this. Ananias could have controlled his thinking.
- e. We have complete control over our thought life – Isa. 55:7-9
3. Sin is NOT the craving or desire conducive of a legitimate need
- a. Example: Food, water and sex are natural God given desires and it is natural to have desires for them (1 Cor. 7:1-9)
 - b. Sin is committed when we attempt to meet natural desires in ways that God has forbidden. This happens when we:
 - 1) When food is placed before God (Phil. 3:18, 19; 1 Cor. 6:12-20)
 - 2) Are too lazy to work and earn a living but steal in order to meet the needs of the body (2 Thess. 3:10-12).
 - 3) When we do as Esau did and despise our birthrights just to fill our bellies (Gen. 25:29-34; Heb. 12:16, 17).
 - 4) When we have sex outside of marriage (adultery and/or fornication) in order to fulfill sexual desires (Heb. 13:4).
 - c. There is nothing wrong with wanting nice things. However, when we strive for these things in worldly ways rather than trusting God to provide these things for us in legitimate ways, we have entered into sin (Mat. 6:25-34).
4. Sin is not admiring something or someone or briefly looking upon something
- a. There is no sin in acknowledging the beauty of something or someone.
 - b. Sin is coveting something that does not belong to you (Ex. 20:17; Deut. 5:21).
 - 1) Example: It is not a sin to be rich, but it is a sin to center one’s whole life and being upon gaining riches and using ungodly methods for obtaining them (1 Tim. 6:8-10, 17-19).
 - c. Sin is worshipping that something or someone that you claim to admire.
 - d. Sin is lusting after someone (Prov. 6:24-26; Mat. 5:28). This goes beyond simply admiring or acknowledging beauty.